



## Acquisition Agency Graduates 2<sup>nd</sup> Class

### Leaders Developed, Returned to Teach Project Management Course

By U.S. Air Force Maj. Lynnane George  
OMC-A Defense Resources Sector

**KABUL, Afghanistan** -- One-hundred-twenty new officers, from captains to lieutenant colonels, graduated from initial acquisition training in Kabul on Feb. 3.

Upon graduation, the officers took their ranks in fields such as contracting, program management, pricing/cost analysis and other key positions in the Ministry of Defense's Acquisition Agency and Acquisition and Technology Policy Directorate. This was the second offering of the nine-day Project Management course and the first during which 50 percent of the instructors were Afghan.

The Acquisition Agency, an Intermediate Command, consisted of about 30 personnel at the beginning of the year. The Ministry of Defense assigned 150 new personnel in January 2005. U.S. Air Force Col. Kevin Bell, Lt. Col. Scott Fox and Maj. Lynnane George of OMC-A's Acquisition Group paired with the U.S. Defense Acquisition University to develop and deliver the courses, providing initial acquisition training to the new officers.

The first class of students graduated on Jan. 17. "The initial class offering went so well, we realized we should continue the momentum," said George. "However, with 120 students and only four U.S. instructors, the class sizes would be too large for an effective learning environment. That's when we decided to have the Afghan mid-level leadership help instruct the course. Since the ultimate goal is to enable them to run their own agency, this was a perfect opportunity to have them start training their own."

The Acquisition Agency, led by Brig. Gen. Abdul Wakil, and Acquisition and



Photo by U.S. Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Mack Davis

**U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Scott Fox presents a graduation certificate, while U.S. Air Force Col. Mark Mueller, Afghan Minister Baz Mohammed Jawhari, Afghan Brig. Gen. Abdul Wakil and Afghan Col. Rajab Ali observe.**

Technology Policy Directorate, led by Col. Rajab Ali, are responsible for acquiring quality products for the Afghan National Army in a timely manner and at a fair and reasonable price. "That is a tough job, and we need a professional acquisition officer corps to perform this mission," said Fox.

Assistant Minister of Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Baz Mohammed Jawhari, and U.S. Air Force

establishing a modern, effective and efficient acquisition program consistent with international business practices."

The DAU instructors consisted of Karen Byrd (contracting and program management), U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Ray Zaun (logistics), U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col. Mike Varmette (risk management) and Judy Fleming (program management). They designed the course to interactively instruct the students on the fundamentals of project management, including planning, scheduling and execution of non-developmental, commercial type procurements.

Afghan instructors included Col. Peer Mohammad (Director, Acquisition Evaluation and Technical Analysis), Col. Shah Ramen (Director, Acquisition and Program Management) of the Acquisition Technology and Policy Directorate, Col. Noor Ahmad (Director, Technical Assessment) and Col. Mohammad Khalil (Director, Program Management) of the Acquisition Agency.

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-- Lt. Col. Scott Fox,  
OMC-A Acquisition Group

Maj. Gen. Craig Weston, then-Chief of OMC-A, addressed the students at the kickoff on Jan. 25.

Jawhari encouraged the students to take advantage of the training to prepare them to serve the ANA and the people of Afghanistan.

Weston, himself a senior member of the U.S. Air Force Acquisition Corps, told them "they are the key to



Photo by U.S. Air Force Maj. Lynne George

## Training Soldiers

**ANA Col. Peer Mohammad instructs the lesson on integrated product teams and leadership.**

Wakil hand-picked each instructor from the first class of graduates based on his background and leadership position in the agency. To capitalize on their experience with the Afghanistan procurement system, he chose them to teach the requirements process, teamwork and leadership, logistics and quality control modules of the course.

At the course graduation on Feb. 3, Jawhari congratulated the agency on its accomplishments and reminded the graduates of the importance of their mission. "Our country has a history of 5,000 years of war, killing each other, and ignorance ... the key to improving the state of our country is to get education like this."

Jawhari also noted that "the progress in the Acquisition Agency is the most I have seen and I am looking forward to having the same progress in the other departments. I believe in your knowledge."

Col. Mark Mueller, Director of Program Integration for OMC-A said,

"This is an important step toward the future of acquisition in the ANA, and as you all know, acquisition is a crucial part of the way ahead for Afghanistan."

Mueller went on to personally thank the Afghan instructors. "The Army, the people of Afghanistan and your coalition partners are counting on you. I know you will not disappoint them."

Student Ali Mohammad spoke on behalf of the students. He thanked the leadership for selecting the best instructors for the course, both Afghan and American. "We are ready to start our job ... (and) continue courses like this - (it is) great for the rebuilding of Afghanistan."

The Acquisition Agency now has nearly 200 officers trained in program management. This is one step in a series of mentoring and training sessions OMC-A's Acquisition Group planned and conducted. The group, consisting of Fox, George and MPRI contract mentors Tom Gilbert and Dave Walker, are responsible for directing the

effort to establish the acquisition function in the ANA and the mentoring and training of the acquisition leadership.

Team members conduct weekly workshops in cataloging procedures, contract administration, contracting and technical assessment. They additionally focus one workshop on the duties and functions of the MoD Acquisition and Technology Policy Directorate.

This training is part of the overall plan designed to achieve initial operating capability by September 2005 and full operating capability by April 2006. The command currently has about a third of its total staff of 730 personnel on board.

The agencies play a critical role in equipping, clothing, housing and feeding the new army to serve the people of Afghanistan. This was just the start of the learning experience for these new students - they will be providing the means to resource the ANA for years to come.

